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CHARLES DICKENS

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PART 136

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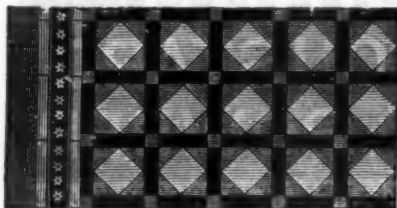
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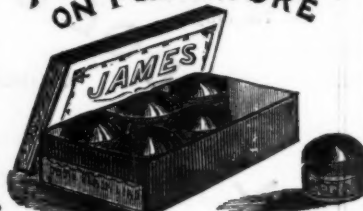
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No. 588. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 1880.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE DUKE'S CHILDREN.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XLII. ISCHL.

It was a custom with Mrs. Finn almost every autumn to go off to Vienna, where she possessed considerable property, and there to inspect the circumstances of her estate. Sometimes her husband would accompany her, and he did so in this year of which we are now speaking. One morning in September they were together at an hotel at Ischl, whither they had come from Vienna, when, as they went through the hall into the courtyard, they came, in the very doorway, upon the Duke of Omnium and his daughter. The duke and Lady Mary had just arrived, having passed through the mountains from the salt-mine district, and were about to take up their residence in the hotel for a few days. They had travelled very slowly, for Lady Mary had been ill, and the duke had expressed his determination to see a doctor at Ischl.

There is no greater mistake than in supposing that only the young blush. But the blushes of middle life are luckily not seen through the tan which has come from the sun, and the gas, and the work, and the wiles of the world. Both the duke and Phineas blushed; and though their blushes were hidden, that peculiar glance of the eye which always accompanies a blush was visible enough from one to the other. The elder lady kept her countenance admirably, and the younger one had no occasion for blushing. She at once ran forward and kissed her friend. The duke stood, with his hat off, waiting to give his hand to the lady, and then took that of his

late colleague. "How odd that we should meet here," he said, turning to Mrs. Finn.

"Odd enough to us that your grace should be here," she said, "because we had heard nothing of your intended coming."

"It is so nice to find you," said Lady Mary. "We are this moment come. Don't say that you are this moment going."

"At this moment we are only going as far as Halstadt."

"And are coming back to dinner? Of course they will dine with us. Will they not, papa?" The duke said that he hoped they would. To declare that you are engaged at an hotel, unless there be some real engagement, is almost an impossibility. There was no escape, and, before they were allowed to get into their carriage, they had promised they would dine with the duke and his daughter.

"I don't know that it is especially a bore," Mrs. Finn said to her husband in the carriage. "You may be quite sure that of whatever trouble there may be in it, he has much more than his share."

"His share should be the whole," said her husband. "No one else has done anything wrong."

When the duke's apology had reached her, so that there was no longer any ground for absolute hostility, then she had told the whole story to her husband. He at first was very indignant. What right had the duke to expect that any ordinary friend should act duenna over his daughter in accordance with his caprices? This was said, and much more of the kind. But any humour towards quarrelling which Phineas Finn might have felt for a day or two was quieted by his wife's

prudence. "A man," she said, "can do no more than apologise. After that there is no room for reproach."

At dinner the conversation turned at first on British politics, in which Mrs. Finn was quite able to take her part. Phineas was decidedly of opinion that Sir Timothy Beeswax and Lord Drummond could not live another session. And on this subject a good deal was said. Later in the evening the duke found himself sitting with Mrs. Finn in the broad verandah over the hotel garden, while Lady Mary was playing to Phineas within. "How do you think she is looking?" asked the father.

"Of course I see that she has been ill. She tells me that she was far from well at Salzburg."

"Yes; indeed for three or four days she frightened me much. She suffered terribly from headaches."

"Nervous headaches?"

"So they said there. I feel quite angry with myself because I did not bring a doctor with us. The trouble and ceremony of such an accompaniment is no doubt disagreeable."

"And I supposed seemed when you started to be unnecessary?"

"Quite unnecessary."

"Does she complain again now?"

"She did to-day—a little."

The next morning Lady Mary could not leave her bed; and the duke, in his sorrow, was obliged to apply to Mrs. Finn. After what had passed on the previous day Mrs. Finn of course called, and was shown at once up to her young friend's room. There she found the girl in great pain, lying with her two thin hands up to her head, and hardly able to utter more than a word. Shortly after that Mrs. Finn was alone with the duke, and then there took place a conversation between them which the lady thought to be very remarkable.

"Had I better send for a doctor from England?" he asked. In answer to this Mrs. Finn expressed her opinion that such a measure was hardly necessary, that the gentleman from the town, who had been called in, seemed to know what he was about, and that the illness, lamentable as it was, did not seem to be in any way dangerous. "One cannot tell what it comes from," said the duke dubiously.

"Young people, I fancy, are often subject to such maladies."

"It must come from something wrong."

"That may be said of all sickness."

"And therefore one tries to find out the cause. She says that she is unhappy." These last words he spoke slowly, and in a low voice. To this Mrs. Finn could make no reply. She did not doubt but that the girl was unhappy, and she knew well why; but the source of Lady Mary's misery was one to which she could not very well allude. "You know all the misery about that young man."

"That is a trouble that requires time to cure it," she said; not meaning to imply that time would cure it by enabling the girl to forget her lover; but because in truth she had not known what else to say.

"If time will cure it."

"Time, they say, cures all sorrows."

"But what should I do to help time? There is no sacrifice I would not make—no sacrifice! Of myself I mean. I would devote myself to her, leaving everything else on one side. We purpose being back in England in October; but I would remain here, if I thought it better for her comfort."

"I cannot tell, Duke."

"Neither can I. But you are a woman and might know better than I do. It is so hard that a man should be left with a charge of which from its very nature he cannot understand the duties." Then he paused, but she could find no words which would suit at the moment. It was almost incredible to her that after what had passed he should speak to her at all as to the condition of his daughter. "I cannot, you know," he said, very seriously, "encourage a hope that she should be allowed to marry that man."

"I do not know."

"You yourself, Mrs. Finn, felt that when she told you about it at Matching."

"I felt that you would disapprove of it."

"Disapprove of it! How could it be otherwise? Of course you felt that. There are ranks in life in which the first comer that suits a maiden's eye may be accepted as a fitting lover. I will not say but that they who are born to such a life may be the happier. They are, I am sure, free from troubles to which they are incident whom fate has called to a different sphere. But duty is duty, and whatever pang it may cost, duty should be performed."

"Certainly."

"Certainly; certainly; certainly," he said, re-echoing her word.

"But then, Duke, one has to be so sure what duty requires. In many matters

this is easy enough, and the only difficulty comes from temptation. There are cases in which it is so hard to know."

"Is this one of them?"

"I think so."

"Then the maiden should—in any class of life—be allowed to take the man that just suits her eye?" As he said this his mind was intent on his Glencora and on Burgo Fitzgerald.

"I have not said so. A man may be bad, vicious, a spendthrift—eaten up by bad habits." Then he frowned, thinking that she also had her mind intent on his Glencora and on Burgo Fitzgerald, and being most unwilling to have the difference between Burgo and Frank Tregear pointed out to him. "Nor have I said," she continued, "that, even were none of these faults apparent in the character of a suitor, the lady should in all cases be advised to accept a young man because he has made himself agreeable to her. There may be discrepancies."

"There are," said he, still with a low voice, but with infinite energy, "insurmountable discrepancies."

"I only said that this was a case in which it might be difficult for you to see your duty plainly."

"Why should it be?"

"You would not have her break her heart?" Then he was silent for awhile, turning over in his mind the proposition which now seemed to have been made to him. If the question came to that—should she be allowed to break her heart and die, or should he save her from that fate by sanctioning her marriage with Tregear? If the choice could be put to him plainly by some supernal power, what then would he choose? If duty required him to prevent this marriage his duty could not be altered by the fact that his girl would avenge herself upon him by dying! If such a marriage were in itself wrong, that wrong could not be made right by the fear of such a catastrophe. Was it not often the case that duty required that someone should die? And yet as he thought of it—thought that the someone whom his mind had suggested was the one female creature now left belonging to him, he put his hand up to his brow and trembled with agony. If he knew, if in truth he believed that such would be the result of firmness on his part, then he would be infirm, then he must yield. Sooner than that, he must welcome this Tregear to his house. But why should he

think that she should die? This woman had now asked him whether he would be willing to break his girl's heart. It was a frightful question; but he could see that it had come naturally in the sequence of the conversation which he had forced upon her. Did girls break their hearts in such emergencies? Was it not all romance? "Men have died and worms have eaten them, but not for love." He remembered it all and carried on the argument in his mind, though the pause was but for a minute. There might be suffering, no doubt. The higher the duties the keener the pangs! But would it become him to be deterred from doing right because she for a time might find that she had made the world bitter to herself? And were there not feminine wiles—tricks by which women learn to have their way in opposition to the judgment of their lords and masters? He did not think that his Mary was wilfully guilty of any scheme. The suffering he knew was true suffering. But not the less did it become him to be on his guard against attacks of this nature.

"No," he said at last; "I would not have her break her heart—if I understand what such words mean. They are generally, I think, used fantastically."

"You would not wish to see her overwhelmed by sorrow."

"Wish it! What a question to ask a father!"

"I must be more plain in my language, Duke. Though such a marriage be distasteful to you, it might perhaps be preferable to see her sorrowing always."

"Why should it? I have to sorrow always. We are told that man is born to sorrow as surely as the sparks fly upward."

"Then I can say nothing further."

"You think I am cruel."

"If I am to say what I really think I shall offend you."

"No; not unless you mean offence."

"I shall never do that to you, Duke. When you talk as you do now you hardly know yourself. You think you could see her suffering, and not be moved by it. But were it to be continued long you would give way. Though we know that there is an infinity of grief in this life, still we struggle to save those we love from grieving. If she be steadfast enough to cling to her affection for this man, then at last you will have to yield." He looked at her frowning, but did not say a word. "Then it will perhaps be a comfort for you to

know that the man himself is trustworthy and honest."

There was a terrible rebuke in this; but still, as he had called it down upon himself, he would not resent it, even in his heart. "Thank you," he said, rising from his chair. "Perhaps you will see her again this afternoon." Of course she assented, and, as the interview had taken place in his rooms, she took her leave.

This which Mrs. Finn had said to him was all to the same effect as that which had come from Lady Cantrip; only it was said with a higher spirit. Both the women saw the matter in the same light. There must be a fight between him and his girl; but she, if she could hold out for a certain time, would be the conqueror. He might take her away and try what absence would do, or he might have recourse to that specific which had answered so well in reference to his own wife; but, if she continued to sorrow during absence, and if she would have nothing to do with the other lover, then he must at last give way! He had declared that he was willing to sacrifice himself, meaning thereby that if a lengthened visit to the cities of China, or a prolonged sojourn in the Western States of America would wean her from her love, he would go to China or to the Western States. At present his self-banishment had been carried no farther than Vienna. During their travels hitherto Tregear's name had not once been mentioned. The duke had come away from home resolved not to mention it, and she was minded to keep it in reserve till some seeming catastrophe should justify a declaration of her purpose. But from first to last she had been sad, and latterly she had been ill. When asked as to her complaint she would simply say that she was not happy. To go on with this through the Chinese cities could hardly be good for either of them. She would not wake herself to any enthusiasm in regard to scenery, costume, pictures, or even discomforts. Wherever she was taken it was all barren to her.

As their plans stood at present, they were to return to England so as to enable her to be at Custins by the middle of October. Had he taught himself to hope that any good could be done by prolonged travelling he would readily have thrown over Custins and Lord Popplecourt. He could not bring himself to trust much to the Popplecourt scheme. But the same contrivance had answered on that former

occasion. When he spoke to her about their plans, she expressed herself quite ready to go back to England. When he suggested those Chinese cities, her face became very long, and she was immediately attacked by paroxysms of headaches.

"I think I should take her to some place on the sea-shore in England," said Mrs. Finn.

"Custins is close to the sea," he replied. "It is Lord Cantrip's place in Dorsetshire. It was partly settled that she was to go there."

"I suppose she likes Lady Cantrip."

"Why should she not?"

"She has not said a word to me to the contrary. I only fear she would feel that she was being sent there, as to a convent."

"What ought I to do then?"

"How can I venture to answer that? What she would like best, I think, would be to return to Matching with you, and to settle down in a quiet way for the winter." The duke shook his head. That would be worse than travelling. She would still have headaches, and still tell him that she was unhappy. "Of course I do not know what your plans are, and pray believe me that I should not obtrude my advice if you did not ask me."

"I know it," he said. "I know how good you are and how reasonable. I know how much you have to forgive."

"Oh, no."

"And, if I have not said so as I should have done, it has not been from want of feeling. I do believe you did what you thought best when Mary told you that story at Matching."

"Why should your grace go back to that?"

"Only that I may acknowledge my indebtedness to you, and say to you somewhat more fully than I could do in my letter that I am sorry for the pain which I gave you."

"All that is over now, and shall be forgotten."

Then he spoke of his immediate plans. He would at once go back to England by slow stages—by very slow stages, staying a day or two at Salzburg, at Ratisbon, at Nuremberg, at Frankfort, and so on. In this way he would reach England about the 10th of October, and Mary would then be ready to go to Custins by the time appointed.

In a day or two Lady Mary was better.

"It is terrible while it lasts," she said, speaking to Mrs. Finn of her headache, "but when it has gone then I am quite well. Only," she added, after a pause—"only I never can be happy again, while papa thinks as he does now." Then there was a party made up before they separated for an excursion to the Hintersee and the Obersee. On this occasion Lady Mary seemed to enjoy herself, as she liked the companionship of Mrs. Finn. Against Lady Cantrip she never said a word, but Lady Cantrip was always a duenna to her, whereas Mrs. Finn was a friend. While the duke and Phineas were discussing politics together—thoroughly enjoying the weakness of Lord Drummond and the iniquity of Sir Timothy—which they did with augmented vehemence from their ponies' backs, the two women in lower voices talked over their own affairs. "I dare say you will be happy at Custins," said Mrs. Finn.

"No, I shall not. There will be people there whom I don't know, and I don't want to know. Have you heard anything about him, Mrs. Finn?"

Mrs. Finn turned round and looked at her—for a moment almost angrily. Then her heart relented. "Do you mean Mr. Tregear?"

"Yes, Mr. Tregear."

"I think I heard that he was shooting with Lord Silverbridge."

"I am glad of that," said Mary.

"It will be pleasant for both of them."

"I am very glad they should be together. While I know that, I feel that we are not altogether separated. I will never give it up, Mrs. Finn—never, never. It is no use taking me to China." In that Mrs. Finn quite agreed with her.

CHAPTER XLII. AGAIN AT KILLANCODLEM.

SILVERBRIDGE remained at Crummie-Toddie under the dominion of Reginald Dobbes till the second week of September. Popplecourt, Nidderdale, and Gerald Palliser were there also, very obedient, and upon the whole efficient. Tregear was intractable, and untrustworthy. He was the cause of much trouble to Mr. Dobbes. He would entertain a most heterodox and injurious idea that, as he had come to Crummie-Toddie for amusement, he was not bound to do anything that did not amuse him. He would not understand that in sport as in other matters there should be an ambition, driving a man on to excel always and be

ahead of others. In spite of this Mr. Dobbes had cause for much triumph. It was going to be the greatest thing ever done by six guns in Scotland. As for Gerald, whom he had regarded as a boy, and who had offended him by saying that Crummie-Toddie was ugly, he was ready to go round the world for him. He had indoctrinated Gerald with all his ideas of a sportsman, even to a contempt for champagne and a conviction that tobacco should be moderated. The three lords too had proved themselves efficient, and the thing was going to be a success. But just when a day was of vital importance, when it was essential that there should be a strong party for a drive, Silverbridge found it absolutely necessary that he should go over to Killancodlem.

"She has gone," said Nidderdale.

"Who the — is she?" asked Silverbridge, almost angrily.

"Everybody knows who she is," said Popplecourt.

"It will be a good thing when some She has got hold of you, my boy, so as to keep you in your proper place."

"If you cannot withstand that sort of attraction you ought not to go in for shooting at all," said Dobbes.

"I shouldn't wonder at his going," continued Nidderdale, "if we didn't all know that the American is no longer there. She has gone to—Bath I think they say."

"I suppose it's Mrs. Jones herself," said Popplecourt.

"My dear boys," said Silverbridge, "you may be quite sure that when I say that I am going to Killancodlem I mean to go to Killancodlem, and that no chaff about young ladies—which I think very disgusting—will stop me. I shall be sorry if Dobbes's roll of the killed should be lessened by a single hand, seeing that his ambition sets that way. Considering the amount of slaughter we have perpetrated, I really think that we need not be over anxious." After this nothing further was said. Tregear, who knew that Mabel Grex was still at Killancodlem, had not spoken.

In truth, Mabel had sent for Lord Silverbridge, and this had been her letter.

"DEAR LORD SILVERBRIDGE, — Mrs. Montacute Jones is cut to the heart because you have not been over to see her again, and she says that it is lamentable to think that such a man as Reginald Dobbes should have so much power over you. 'Only twenty miles,'

she says, 'and he knows that we are here!' I told her that you knew Miss Boncassen was gone.

"But, though Miss Boncassen has left us, we are a very pleasant party, and surely you must be tired of such a place as Crummie-Toddie. If only for the sake of getting a good dinner once in a way do come over again. I shall be here yet for ten days. As they will not let me go back to Grex I don't know where I could be more happy. I have been asked to go to Custins, and suppose I shall turn up there some time in the autumn.

"And now shall I tell you what I expect? I do expect that you will come over to see me. 'I did see her the other day,' you will say, 'and she did not make herself pleasant.' I know that. How was I to make myself pleasant, when I found myself so completely snuffed out by your American beauty? Now she is away, and Richard will be himself. Do come, because in truth I want to see you.—Yours always sincerely,
"MABEL GREX."

On receiving this he at once made up his mind to go to Killancodlem, but he could not make up his mind why it was that she had asked him. He was sure of two things—sure, in the first place, that she had intended to let him know that she did not care about him, and then sure that she was aware of his intention in regard to Miss Boncassen. Everybody at Killancodlem had seen it, to his disgust, but still that it was so had been manifest. And he had consoled himself, feeling that it would matter nothing should he be accepted. She had made an attempt to talk him out of his purpose. Could it be that she thought it possible a second attempt might be successful? If so, she did not know him.

She had in truth thought not only that this, but that something further than this might be possible. Of course the prize loomed larger before her eyes, as the prospects of obtaining it became less. She could not doubt that he had intended to offer her his hand when he had spoken to her of his love in London. Then she had stopped him—had "spared him," as she had told her friend. Certainly she had then been swayed by some feeling that it would be ungenerous in her to seize greedily the first opportunity he had given her. But he had again made an effort. He surely would not have sent her the ring, had he not intended her to regard him as her lover. When she received the

ring her heart had beat very high. Then she had sent that little note saying that she would keep it till she could give it to his wife. When she wrote that she had intended the ring should be her own. And other things pressed upon her mind. Why had she been asked to the dinner at Richmond? Why was she invited to Custins? Little hints had reached her of the duke's good-will towards her. If on that side the marriage were approved, why should she destroy her own hopes?

Then she had seen him with Miss Boncassen, and in her pique had forced the ring back upon him. During that long game on the lawn her feelings had been very bitter. Of course the girl was the lovelier of the two. All the world was raving of her beauty. And there was no doubt as to the charm of her wit and manner. And then she had no touch of that blasé used-up way of life of which Lady Mabel was conscious herself. It was natural that it should be so. And was she, Mabel Grex, the girl to stand in his way and to force herself upon him, if he loved another? Certainly not, though there might be a triple ducal coronet to be had.

But were there not other considerations? Could it be well that the heir of the House of Omnium should marry an American girl, as to whose humble birth whispers were already afloat? As his friend, would it not be right that she should tell him what the world would say? As his friend, therefore, she had given him her counsel.

When he was gone the whole thing weighed heavily upon her mind. Why should she lose the prize if it might still be her own? To be Duchess of Omnium! She had read of many of the other sex, and of one or two of her own, who by settled resolution had achieved greatness in opposition to all obstacles. Was this thing beyond her reach? To hunt him, and catch him, and marry him to his own injury, that would be impossible to her. She was sure of herself there. But how infinitely better would this be for him! Would she not have all his family with her, and all the world of England? In how short a time would he not repent his marriage with Miss Boncassen? Whereas, were she his wife, she would so stir herself for his joys, for his good, for his honour, that there should be no possibility of repentance. And he certainly had loved her. Why else had he followed her, and spoken such words to her? Of course he

had loved her! But then there had come this blaze of beauty, and had carried off—not his heart, but his imagination. Because he had yielded to such fascination, was she to desert him, and also to desert herself? From day to day she thought of it, and then she wrote that letter. She hardly knew what she would do, what she might say, but she would trust to the opportunity to do and say something.

"If you have no room for me," he said to Mrs. Jones, "you must scold Lady Mab. She has told me that you told her to invite me."

"Of course I did. Do you think I would not sleep in the stables, and give you up my own bed if there were no other? It is so good of you to come!"

"So good of you, Mrs. Jones, to ask me."

"So very kind to come when all the attraction has gone!" Then he blushed and stammered, and was just able to say that his only object in life was to pour out his adoration at the feet of Mrs. Montacute Jones herself.

There was a certain Lady Fawn—a pretty mincing married woman of about twenty-five, with a husband much older, who liked mild flirtations with mild young men. "I am afraid we've lost your great attraction," she whispered to him.

"Certainly not as long as Lady Fawn is here," he said, seating himself close to her on a garden bench, and seizing suddenly hold of her hand. She gave a little scream and a jerk, and so relieved herself from him. "You see," said he, "people do make such mistakes about a man's feelings."

"Lord Silverbridge!"

"It's quite true, but I'll tell you all about it another time;" and so he left her. All these little troubles, his experience in the "House," the necessity of snubbing Tifto, the choice of a wife, and his battles with Reginald Dobbes, were giving him by degrees age and flavour.

Lady Mabel had fluttered about him on his first coming, and had been very gracious, doing the part of an old friend. "There is to be a big shooting to-morrow," she said, in presence of Mrs. Jones.

"If it is to come to that," he said, "I might as well go back to Dobbydom."

"You may shoot if you like" said Lady Mabel.

"I haven't even brought a gun with me."

"Then we'll have a walk—a whole lot of us," she said.

In the evening, about an hour before dinner, Silverbridge and Lady Mabel were seated together on the bank of a little stream which ran on the other side of the road, but on a spot not more than a furlong from the hall-door. She had brought him there, but she had done so without any definite scheme. She had made no plan of campaign for the evening, having felt relieved when she found herself able to postpone the project of her attack till the morrow. Of course there must be an attack, but how it should be made she had never had the courage to tell herself. The great women of the world, Semiramis, Pochontas, the Ida Pfeiffers, and the Charlotte Cordays, had never been wanting to themselves when the moment for action came.

Now she was pleased to have this opportunity added to her—this pleasant minute in which some soft preparatory word might be spoken—but the great effort should be on the morrow.

"Is not this nicer than shooting with Mr. Dobbes?" she asked.

"A great deal nicer. Of course I am bound to say so."

"But in truth. I want to find out what you really like. Men are so different. You need not pay me any compliment; you know that well enough."

"I like you better than Dobbes, if you mean that."

"Even so much is something."

"But I am fond of shooting."

"Only a man may have enough of it."

"Too much, if he is subject to Dobbes, as Dobbes likes them to be. Gerald likes it."

"Did you think it odd," she said, after a pause, "that I should ask you to come over again?"

"Was it odd?" he replied.

"That is as you may take it. There is certainly no other man in the world to whom I would have done it."

"Not to Tregear?"

"Yes," she said; "yes—to Tregear, could I have been as sure of a welcome for him as I am for you. Frank is in all respects the same as a brother to me. That would not have seemed odd—I mean to myself."

"And has this been odd to yourself?"

"Yes. Not that anybody else has felt it so. Only I, and perhaps you. You felt it so?"

"Not especially. I thought you were a very good fellow. I have always thought that, except when you made me take back the ring."

"Does that still fret you?"

"No man likes to take back a thing. It makes him seem to have been awkward and stupid in giving it."

"It was the value——"

"You should have left me to judge of that."

"If I have offended you I will beg your pardon. Give me anything else, anything but that, and I will take it."

"But why not that?" said he.

"Now that you have fitted it for a lady's finger it should go to your wife. No one else should have it." Upon this he brought the ring once more out of his pocket, and again offered it to her. "No; anything but that. That your wife must have." Then he put the ring back again. "It would have been nicer for you had Miss Boncassen been here." In saying this she followed no plan. It came rather from pique. It was almost as though she had asked him whether Miss Boncassen was to have the ring.

"What makes you say that?"

"But it would."

"Yes, it would," he replied stoutly, turning round as he lay upon the ground facing her.

"Has it come to that?"

"Come to what? You ask me a question, and I answer you truly."

"You cannot be happy without her?"

"I did not say so. You ask me whether I should like to have her here, and I say Yes. What would you think of me if I said No?"

"My being here is not enough?" This should not have been said, of course, but the little speech came from the exquisite pain of the moment. She had meant to have said hardly anything. She had intended to have been happy with him, just touching lightly on things which might lead to that attack which must be made on the morrow. But words will often lead whither the speaker has not intended. So it was now, and in the soreness of her heart she spoke. "My being here is not enough?"

"It would be enough," he said, jumping on his feet, "if you understood all, and would be kind to me."

"I will at any rate be kind to you," she replied, as she sat upon the bank looking at the running water.

"I have asked Miss Boncassen to be my wife."

"And she has accepted?"

"No, not as yet. She is to take three

months to think of it. Of course I love her best of all. If you will sympathise with me in that, then I will be as happy with you as the day is long."

"No," said she, "I cannot. I will not."

"Very well."

"There should be no such marriage. If you have told me in confidence——"

"Of course I have told you in confidence."

"It will go no farther; but there can be no sympathy between us. It—it—it is not—is not——" Then she burst into tears.

"Mabel!"

"No, sir, no; no! What did you mean? But never mind. I have no questions to ask, not a word to say. Why should I? Only this, that such a marriage will disgrace your family. To me it is no more than to anybody else. But it will disgrace your family."

How she got back to the house she hardly knew; nor did he. That evening they did not again speak to each other, and on the following morning there was no walk to the mountains. Before dinner he drove himself back to Crummie-Toddie, and, when he was taking his leave, she shook hands with him with her usual pleasant smile.

TITLE PAGES.

ONE of the critical journals, some few months ago, in noticing a new work, remarked incidentally that the book had an unusually long title page. This was mentioned, not necessarily as a matter for disapproval, but simply as a noticeable fact.

A curious enquiry is hereby suggested, viz., whether any standard is recognised in the fulness with which the contents of a book are described in its title. Otherwise expressed, what is a long title-page? what the quantity of type that would warrant this or a similar designation? There are instances, known to most readers, in which the real title of a book consists of one word only. If we remember rightly, this is exemplified in *Eothen*, the rest of the page being devoted to the names of the author and publisher, the date and place of publication, and so forth. At the other extreme, we encounter works preceded by title-pages of amazing prolixity, in some instances conveying real information, in others a mass of what the world irreverently calls *rigmarole*. To what extent the title of a book is due to

the publishers rather than to the author, is not known by the outer world.

Before noticing the comments which have been made on this subject by literary critics, and the motives which presumably influence authors in indulging in prolixity and pomposity of title-page, it may be convenient to give some idea of the extent to which the practice has been carried in a few instances recently examined for that purpose. They are merely samples of a very considerable number, mostly published in the days before steam-engines, gaslights, and printing-machines.

There is extant a small German work, duodecimo in form, the title-page of which is loaded with a hundred and seventy words. Considering the tendency of many, if not most, German writers to indulge in prolixity in literary style and treatment, there can be little or no doubt that the number of words here mentioned was often exceeded in title-pages equally small. The work itself is a curious treatise on the compound subjects of natural history and natural magic—two subjects often treated in connexion by old writers.

Singularly enough, a modern writer who commented somewhat sarcastically on the over-fulness of title-pages in bygone generations, indulged in the very habit in the title-page of his own volume containing his comments. We are adverting to Mr. Timperley, who wrote an elaborate and very useful work on printing and the various arts connected with it. A second edition was published about forty years ago; and as the title-page of this edition furnishes a good example of the manner in which a hundred and eighty-eight words may be absorbed in minutely describing the purpose and contents of a book, we will transcribe it in full: "Encyclopædia of Literary and Typographical Anecdote. Being a digest of the most interesting facts illustrative of the History of Literature and Printing, from the earliest period to the present time. Interspersed with Biographical Sketches of eminent booksellers, printers, type-founders, engravers, bookbinders, and papermakers of all ages and countries, but especially Great Britain; with Bibliographical and Descriptive Accounts of their principal productions, and occasional extracts from them. Including curious particulars of the first introduction of Printing into various countries, and of the Books there printed, notices of early Bibles and Liturgies of all countries,

especially books printed in England or in English; a History of all the Newspapers, Periodicals, and Almanacs published in this country; and an Account of Ink and Paper, Writing and Printing Materials, the Invention of Paper and Paper Machines, compiled and condensed from Nichols's Literary Anecdotes, and numerous other authorities, by C. H. Timperley; Second Edition; to which is added a continuation to the present time, comprising recent Biographies, chiefly of Booksellers, and a Practical Manual of Printing. London: Henry G. Bohn, York Street, Covent Garden, MDCCCXLII." A rich store-house of book-lore and book gossip unquestionably, that must have required a large amount of research to bring together; but the singular point to notice is the departure of the author or editor from the rule of judicious brevity of title-page he had recommended; as if he would advise to the world, "Do as I say, not as I do." We may just mention as a peculiarity that the whole of the above title is printed in Roman capitals—an unusual thing when prolixity is indulged in.

One work, published in the time of George the Third, has a title-page of such inordinate length that we cannot transcribe it here in full. A few specimens of its quality will suffice. "A New Method of Short and Easie Writing; being the Plainest, Easiest, and Quickest Way of Writing ever yet published or invented, notwithstanding the many attempts made since the year One Thousand Six Hundred, not only by Mr. Rich and his numerous train of followers, but also by—" Here ensues a long list of previous authors whose systems of expeditious writing had been published. Then he goes on: "All which, together with several both ancient and modern manuscripts on this subject, have been diligently perused and studied, in order to the complete finishing of this little work; which, how inconsiderable soever it may seem, was nevertheless above twenty years composing. To the end that by consulting all that has been written on this art, and so many years' practice and study of it by the author, it might now (as indeed it is) at last be brought to its so-long-wished-for and desired perfection, namely, of tracing [following?] a moderate speaker. So that anyone who seriously compares the method here proposed with those of other authors, and reduces it to practice, will not only own it to be the shortest, plainest, easiest, and simplest

method of writing ever yet extant, but even the shortest and easiest that can possibly be invented." Not even yet does this portentous title come to an end. After these two instalments of self-praise, the complacent author declares the universal applicability of his system. "Necessary for all Ministers of State, Lawyers, Divines, Students, Members of Parliament, Tradesmen, Shopkeepers, Travellers, &c.; in fine, all sorts of persons from the highest to the lowest quality, degree, rank, station, or condition whatsoever, to write down presently whatever they hear or see. *Diu multumque desideratum.*"

A whimsicality in the book, an oddity of which the author was evidently unconscious, is the incongruity of a very long title to a book devoted to a very short system of writing.

The most diffuse title-page which has been examined by the present writer contains the outrageous number of three hundred and thirty-three words, although the size of page barely equals that which is nowadays called *medium octavo*. The book to which it belongs was published just about the close of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The author in the title not only describes the book, but includes in it what we are accustomed to call a preface and introduction; and also what is virtually a bit of a sermon or discourse on religious topics. Without presenting the whole of this formidable composition, we transcribe so much as will give the reader some idea of the old mania for prolix title-pages:

"Dialogicall Discourse of Spirits and Divels, declaring their powers, essences, natures, dispositions, and operations; their possessions and dispossessions. With other the appendantes peculiarly appertaining to these special points. Verie conducive and pertinent to the timely procuring of some Christian conformation in judgment for the peaceably compounding of the late strong controversies concerning all such intricate and difficult doubts. By John Deacon and John Walker, preachers."

Generally speaking, when we come to the names of the authors, we know that the end of the title-page is near at hand. No such convenient brevity in the present case; for a kind of homily next attracts the eye much longer than the preceding matter: "If there shall arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and give thee a signe and woonder, and the signe and woonder which he hath

tolde thee come to passe, saying, 'Let us go after other Gods which thou knowest not, and let us serve them;' thou shalt not hearken to the words of that prophet or to that dreamer of dreames. For the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your hearte and with all your soule (*Dent. xiii. 1, 2, 3*). If any shall say unto you, lo, heere is Christ, or there is Christ, believe them not; for there shall arise false Christes and false prophets, who shall show great signes and woonders; so that if it were possible they should deceive the verie elect (*Matthew xxiv. 23, 24*)."

This wonderful title-page, which requires the use of very small print for the most part, does not even yet terminate. After a quotation from a discourse on the Trinity by St. Augustine in Latin, the forty-four words of which we may pass over, comes an English translation: "That is, whoso not hearth, or readeth, where he is persuaded with me, let him procede with me; where he is doubtfull, let him enquire with me; where he acknowledgedgeth his error, let him returne with me; where he espieth mine, let him recall thee. So shall we walke joyntlie together in the way of charitie, going forward towards him of whom it is written 'Seek ye his face ever more.' *Propugnaculum vitæ patientia.*" And all this is the title-page of a small book!

The biblioplists and bibliographers, who have commented on the curious diversities of taste in this matter, have supplied much peculiar information not generally known among readers. Doctor Dibdin, the humorous and learned author of the *Bibliographical Decameron*, tells us that the earliest printed books, those which date from the earliest period in the history of printing till the later years of the fifteenth century, have in most cases no title-page whatever. Nearly the whole of William Caxton's books are without this kind of vestibule-like adornment. The learned doctor, proud of his knowledge on all these matters, pokes fun unmercifully at the book-buyers less gifted than himself. "It has often made my heart merry on seeing in a public auction-room the uninstructed collector, or unledged bibliographical antiquarian (if you will permit such a simile) exploring with a curious and anxious eye the fly-leaf or the few previous leaves for this said title-page. Yet more merrily hath my heart danced when I have seen a solemn decla-

ration in a bookseller's catalogue that such or such a copy appears to be perfect with the exception of the title-page, when the said copy peradventure was printed as early as the year 1470."

When title-pages came into general use we learn from Doctor Dibdin that they were modest in form and length. A simple line, or two or three lines arranged lozenge-wise, rather towards the top of the page, constituted the title-pages or, as the doctor calls them, the "Tuscan book-vestibules." The gradation or rise towards "Corinthian façades," or ornamental title-pages, "reminds one of Cowper's description of the progress of the rough tripod to the satin sofa. At length, however, the public wished for something better than these cold and uninviting preludes to the contents of a printed volume. As the art became general, and as the feeling of the miraculous effect of it subsided, it was essential to adopt some plan more captivating to the public eye, and more likely to obtain a better sale for the work itself." And so grew up by degrees the custom of introducing woodcuts in the title-pages, some of which take rank among the most curious specimens of old wood-engraving. Some illustrations in the title soared to the dignity of copper-plate.

Doctor Griffiths, who established the *Monthly Review* in the time of George the First, remarked in his first advertisement relating to that work: "The abuse of title-pages is obviously come to such a pass that few readers care to take in a book, any more than a servant, without a character." It was partly with a view of giving an impartial character to new books, irrespective of the glitter and boast of the title-pages, that he founded his *Review*.

The remarks of one more commentator on this subject, and we have done. Nichols, the learned author of the *Literary Anecdotes*, made pointed allusion to the style of title-page in vogue during the early part of the last century. "Copious, florid, and pompous title-pages, though reprobated by Swift, ridiculed by Arbuthnot, and continually laughed at by every respectable author, have yet, in defiance to common sense, obtained that kind of general toleration which we often see given to things of far greater importance; so that a prudent person would have been as diffident in judging of the contents of a book from its title, as he would of taking the character of some exalted personages, whose names

were generally the precursors of more solid matter, from the dedication. This kind of titulatory puffing, it is said, used to put Johnny Barber (a London printer in the time of Swift) so much out of temper, that he was ready to turn an author out of his shop if the frontispiece of his manuscript exceeded the bounds of moderation."

Doubtless we should be benefited by many little improvements in literary style, and in the getting up of books, but recent title-pages seldom run into the extravagances of prolixity.

WORK.

If some great angel spake to me to-night
In awful language of the unknown land,
Bidding me choose from treasure infinite,
From goodly gifts and glories in his hand,
The thing I coveted; what should I take?
Fame's wreath of bays? the fickle world's esteem?
Nay, greenest bays may wave on brows that ache,
And world's applauding passeth as a dream.
Should I choose Love to fill mine empty heart,
With soft, strong sweetness, as in days of old?
Nay, for Love's rapture hath an after-smart,
And on Love's rose the thorns are manifold.
Should I choose Life with long-succeeding years?
Nay, earth's long life is longer time for tears.
I would choose Work, and never-failing power
To work without weak hindrance by the way,
Without recurrence of the weary hour
When tired, tyrant Nature holds its sway
Over the busy brain and toiling hand.
Ah! if an angel came to me to-night,
Speaking in language of the unknown land,
So would I choose from treasure infinite.
But well I know the blessed gift I crave,
The tireless strength for never-ending task,
Is not for this life. But beyond the grave
It may be I shall find the thing I ask:
For I believe there is a better land,
Where will, and work, and strength go hand in hand.

SCIENCE AND CRIME.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

THE scientific study of criminals, and the philosophic study of crimes, is not merely an interesting, but a highly warrantable exercise of intellect. Only through some such investigation into these subjects can a knowledge of the nature, cause, and cure of crimes be attained—if, indeed, such knowledge in its perfect phases be ever reached in human history. And only, when aided by the skilled expert—the chemist, surgeon, physiologist, or engraver—and by the deductions and inductions science is able or prepared to draw from any given set of circumstances, is justice enabled to enter upon the pursuit of crime, and to make her name a terror to evil-doers. It is not our intention to follow, at present, such experimenters as Mr. Francis Galton in his remarkable researches

into the conformation and configuration of the criminal head, amongst other types of human character. Readers interested in knowing what may be done in the way of a scientific study of character should peruse Mr. Galton's address to the Anthropological Section of the British Association for 1877. In that address will be found embodied some curious facts and inferences relative to the classification of groups and types of men based on their habits of mind and physiognomy. By the application of an ingenious method of observation, in which, by an arrangement of mirrors four views of a person's head can be simultaneously photographed, the full and complete comparison of types of head-conformation can be effected. As the result of investigations conducted on this basis, Mr. Galton mentions that by physiognomy, together with the general contour of the head, a practical arrangement of criminal types becomes possible. Provided with a large number of photographs of criminals, and by familiarising himself with this collection, certain natural classes of criminals became discernible; and thus a scientific study of character may assist in the determination of the results of criminal tendencies, and, through these, towards the amelioration of the race.

Thus much for the part science promises to play in determining the causes of crime and criminals. With the results of crime, however, science at present concerns herself much more nearly; and it is with the ways and means science brings to bear on the detection of crime that we purpose chiefly to concern ourselves in the present paper. Our newspapers familiarise us, day by day, with instances of the application of scientific methods to criminal investigation. Not a case of forgery is tried but the expert in caligraphy and engraving is appealed to in order to aid the cause of justice, by the detection, through scientific means, of likenesses or differences in hand-writing, or of alterations and erasures in disputed deeds or manuscripts. Every case of homicide brings its array of medical and surgical evidence, or its quota of chemists, prepared to do battle for the truth. Even the identification of a corpus delicti may be a matter in which medical science alone has absolute sway, and in which the skill of the medical jurist, with his testimony to the probable time and circumstances of death, may first point the way in which

detective science should travel. A blood-stain, and its nature, when interpreted by the microscopist, may convict the suspected, or may, on the other hand, set him free. And, in many other ways and diverse fashions, the art of the detective may be shown to owe more to science than most people unacquainted with the routine of criminal investigation could readily imagine.

To select a simple case, and one, nevertheless, regarding which much popular misconception exists, let us try to discover the place and power of the microscope in medical jurisprudence. In such a study we may discover that certain powers, popularly imagined to be at the beck and call of the microscopist, are grossly exaggerated; whilst it may also be shown that the actual extent of the microscopist's ability fully outweighs the fallacies just alluded to. Chief among the cases in which the microscope becomes of paramount importance as an agent in the detection of crime, are those in which blood-stains, or marks of allied characters, and fragments of clothing or hairs, require to be examined and referred to their exact source. An actual case may be related by way of exemplifying the conditions demanding enquiry. A man was tried in 1857 at one of our English assizes for the supposed murder of a companion. The dead man's throat had been cut in such a fashion as to preclude the idea of suicide. The prisoner had been last seen in the company of the deceased, and in his possession a knife stained with blood was found. This knife was alleged by the prosecution to be that with which the murder was committed, and the stains thereupon were alleged to be those of human blood. The defence explained the presence of these stains by asserting that they were produced by cutting raw beef. Now, it may be asked, in what position is science placed in such an issue as the present? Could the microscopist, placed in the witness-box, swear to the identity of the stain with blood; and could he testify to its being human blood as distinguished from that of the ox? To the first query, an affirmative answer must be returned. Chemical tests of great delicacy are known whereby the presence of blood can be infallibly detected. Mr. Sorby tells us that spectrum analysis will reveal the presence of blood where the stain is only the tenth of an inch in diameter, or where a quantity of the red colouring matter of blood, not exceeding the one

hundredth part of a grain, can be obtained. In so far as blood itself, and its mere presence is concerned, there are no scientific difficulties in the way of its exact determination and separation from all other red-coloured stains. But when we turn to the question of the exact source of the blood-stains, we find the powers of science to be limited in some degree. In the case just alluded to, in which the defence rested upon a statement that the blood-stains were obtained from beef, the fallacies of evidence which grossly departed from a scientific standard were exemplified. A chemist gave evidence in which he alleged that the knife in question had been immersed in living blood to its hilt, and that the blood was certainly not that of the ox or sheep. This testimony was offered, despite the fact known to every physiologist that there exists no appreciable differences between the stain of living blood and of blood from a recently killed animal; and that the microscopist is as yet unable to detect differences between the blood of man and that of the ox or sheep sufficiently clear to enable him to decide their exact and specific nature. Even spectrum analysis, with all its subtlety of method and delicacy of research, cannot decide upon exact differences between new and old blood-stains; nor can it enable the experimenter to say if the blood be human or that of a lower animal. Fortunately for the cause of justice in the foregoing case, the crime was brought home to the prisoner by evidence other than that of the chemist in question, and by testimony which depended on no fallacies of microscopic testimony.

To discover the limitations of science in such a case, we must make ourselves familiar with the details of an elementary study in physiology. When a thin film of human blood is examined under a high power of the microscope, it is seen to present the appearance of a clear watery fluid—the serum and plasma of the physiologist—in which float an immense number of small round bodies, the blood-corpuscles. These latter are of two kinds, red and white; the red being by far the more numerous, and imparting, through their immense numbers, the red hue to the blood. The red corpuscles of human blood are round and biconcave in form, each measuring from the one three-thousandth to the one four-thousandth of an inch in diameter. The white corpuscles are a

little larger and attain a diameter averaging the one two-thousand five-hundredth part of an inch. Thus it may be safely asserted that when the microscopist is able to discern in any liquid those characteristic blood-globules, he may positively allege that the liquid in question is certainly blood. When the further and equally important question of the kind of blood is submitted to the scientific observer, his answers should savour of caution. The red corpuscles of man, unlike the white, do not possess a central particle or nucleus. They are therefore in physiological language said to be "non-nucleated." But it is noteworthy that, in this latter feature, man's blood-globules agree with those of all other mammals or quadrupeds. Every quadruped, in short, possesses red blood-globules which want a central spot or nucleus. Moreover, all quadrupeds, except the camel-tribe, possess red blood-globules of circular shape; those of the camel being elliptical in form. But when we descend in the animal scale and pass to the birds, as most nearly approaching quadrupeds, and from the birds to reptiles and fishes, the blood-globules are found, in these lower classes, to be not merely oval or elliptical in shape, but to be invariably nucleated—that is, possessing each a central particle.

With this zoological information at hand, we may be able to appreciate the power of the microscope as a detector of crime. In 1851, the defence, in a case of murder tried at the Essex Assizes, rested partly on the statement that the blood-stains on the clothes of the prisoner were derived from chicken's blood. In such a case the microscopic evidence is invaluable; since the blood of the bird will contain oval and nucleated globules; and from an examination of these blood-stains the prisoner's statement in the case referred to was proved to be false, the corpuscles being those of some mammal. Similarly, when the late Professor Hughes Bennett of Edinburgh was confronted with a patient supposed to be troubled with chest-disease of serious type, an examination of the fluid-blood supposed to have come from the lungs, revealed the presence of oval blood-globules. The patient's wonder may be better imagined than described, when her imposture was thus declared plain. Seeing then that the blood of quadrupeds is distinguishable from that of all other animals, the question yet remains how far does microscopical

evidence proceed in determining human blood from that of other mammals? Here, leaving aside the singular and exceptional case of the camels and their neighbours with oval but non-nucleated globules, the chief, and indeed the only, guide to the microscopist must be size. This guide, it may be further noticed, is by no means a certain or exact test; since even in one and the same animal the blood-globules may vary in dimensions. In some quadrupeds, it is true, the excessively minute nature of the globules would of itself form a feature distinguishing them from those of man. Thus the blood-corpuscles of the musk-deer measure the one twelve thousand three hundred and twenty-fifth part of an inch in diameter, such a size being infinitesimal when compared with those of man. When, however, we compare the blood of ordinary domestic animals with human blood, the difficulties in the way of exact determination increase in a very marked fashion. It is known as a fact that the blood-globules of the horse, ox, ass, mouse, cat, pig, and bat are nearly of the same size; the dimensions of the blood-globules bearing no reference to the size of the animal to which they belong.

The blood globules which approach most nearly to those of man in size are found in the dog, rabbit, and hare. Supposing, therefore, that in a case of suspected murder a blood-stain were declared to be that of a dog, he would be a worse than foolish scientist who would even venture to hazard his reputation by stating in a witness-box his ability to distinguish the stain as that of human blood. Cases in illustration of the foregoing facts are abundantly met with in the records of criminal jurisprudence. A medical witness, giving evidence some years ago at an English assizes in a case of suspected homicide, was sharply rebuked by the presiding judge for the enunciation of speculative niceties regarding blood; and in no eyes does such a witness seem more foolish than in those of scientific men, who know best the fallible ground on which he is treading. In another case a scientific witness alleged his ability to distinguish certain stains as those of horse's blood, and others as those of human blood—such evidence being inadmissible on scientific grounds, and therefore morally and legally wrong.

The power and value of the microscope as an aid to the discovery of the truth in criminal cases is, however, by no means

limited to the determination of blood-stains. On weapons alleged to have been used with homicidal intent or effect, the merest traces of various substances may occasionally be found, and may serve in the hands of the man of science as important clues. A Dr. Lyons has left on record a case, in which the supposition of a person's guilt as a murderer appeared to be materially strengthened by the discovery, beneath a bed, of a hatchet to which clotted blood and hairs were adherent. The hair, submitted to microscopical examination, was discovered to belong to some animal; and this fact helped to turn the tide of evidence in favour of the accused; although had this case occurred before the day of the microscope and its use in medicine, it is not difficult to predict what would have been the result of the trial in question. Cotton fibres, proved by microscopical research to be such, served as a link in the chain of evidence adduced against a prisoner tried for homicide at an Essex Assizes in 1852. On the boots of another man charged with a like crime at Maidstone in 1863, Doctors Taylor and Pavy discovered some hairs corresponding with those taken from the head of the deceased, who had been fatally assaulted by kicking; whilst some red woollen fibres also found on the boots of the accused corresponded with those of a woollen comforter with which the deceased had been provided. So also in a case of much mystery, in which a young woman was found brutally murdered, a knife which had been placed in the hand of the deceased—presumably for the purpose of simulating death by suicide—bore on its blade amidst a small blood-clot a number of woollen fibres of a peculiar hue. These fibres exactly corresponded with those of a woollen jacket worn by the accused, who was convicted, and duly confessed his crime. Such examples certainly serve to show the exceeding importance in medical jurisprudence of the veriest trifles, and to demonstrate how the most insignificant clues may, when welded into the chain of circumstances, literally form "confirmations strong as proofs of holy writ." By aid of the microscope, linen fibres may be distinguished from those of cotton, and both from those of wool; whilst marked differences are observable in the hairs of different animals.

Shreds and patches may thus literally piece out evidence of importance for or against an accused person. And not less clearly is this fact shown when the trifling

details on which grave discoveries often hinge are illustrated. One Sellis, who had attacked the Duke of Cumberland, thereafter destroyed himself. Sellis committed suicide by cut-throat, and on the left side of the bed on which he was found a razor was laid. This otherwise suspicious circumstance, which laid the late Duke of Cumberland under some suspicion in 1810, was clearly explained when Sellis was proved to be equally dexterous in the use of both hands. A man was found dead in 1865 in London under similar circumstances to Sellis, the left hand having been used to inflict the fatal injury. The unusual situation of the wound was explained when the deceased was proved to be a wood-carver by trade, and to have been accustomed to use both hands when at work. A singular and shrewd observation of Sir Astley Cooper's was the means of detecting a criminal of no ordinary type. A Mr. Blight, of Deptford, was fatally wounded by a pistol-shot in 1806, and Sir Astley was called in to see the sufferer. Proceeding to the scene of the assault, Sir Astley, from an examination of the locality and the position of the wounded man, together with the situation of the wound, came to the conclusion that the assassin must have been a left-handed man. A Mr. Patch answered to the latter description. He was near the locality at the time of the murder, and, hitherto unsuspected, he was arrested, tried and convicted for the offence, fully confessing his guilt before his execution.

The case of Bolam, who was tried at the Newcastle Summer Assizes in 1839 for the murder of a man named Millie, presents some features worthy of note as showing the difficulties against which the medical jurist may have to contend. The circumstances of the case were altogether of a peculiar kind. Millie was killed by direct violence done to the head, and, when discovered, Bolam was found lying close by in a state of insensibility, real or pretended, whilst the apartment in which both were found had been set on fire. Bolam stated that he had been attacked by some person, and had been knocked down by a blow on the head. Attempting to escape, he was again thrown to the ground, and then became aware of an attempt being made to cut his throat, although by his own showing he did not use his hands to prevent the injury, and no wounds or cuts were found upon his hands. The only injury Bolam appeared to have sustained was a wound on

the left side of the neck, but this wound was neither considerable in extent nor in depth; it had involved no deep tissue, and had caused but little bleeding. His coat and other garments were cut in many places, but the incisions were entirely unrepresented upon his body. The case really turned upon the nature of these injuries, and the solution of their infliction. If they were likely to have been inflicted by a third person, then this third party might have also murdered Millie. If Bolam were the self-inflictor of these wounds, the theory of the prosecution that they had been caused with the view of screening his own crime became, on the other hand, highly probable. The scientific evidence, aided by a full consideration of all the circumstances of this case, was given decidedly against the prisoner. The case terminated in a verdict of manslaughter against Bolam, who was accordingly sentenced for that crime. Equally interesting, as showing the complex nature of the cases which await solution, and of the occasionally simple fashion in which such solution may dawn upon the investigators, is an instance related as having occurred at Nottingham in 1872. In this case a young man preferred a charge of assault and wounding against a person whose motives for committing such an offence were undiscoverable. As evidence the prosecutor submitted his wounded arm, his coat, and his shirt-sleeve. He showed that they had indeed been cut, but a more careful examination revealed the interesting fact that the lining of the coat-sleeve was intact. No clearer proof was required to show that the charge was false, and the accused person was at once liberated.

No more interesting details in the annals of criminal science can be presented than those which bear upon cases in which the evidence for suicide, as against homicide, has to be weighed and determined. Allusion has already been made to cases, such as those of Sellis and the wood-carver, in which a knowledge of the peculiarities of the deceased served to explain the cause of death. An historical instance, illustrating this phase of our subject, is that of the Prince of Condé, whose death occurred in 1830. On the 27th of August in that year, the prince was found dead in his bedroom under somewhat unusual, and it may be added suspicious, circumstances. The body was suspended from the window sash by a linen handkerchief, which was

in turn attached to a cravat round the neck of the deceased. An important feature in this case, and one which certainly lent an air of mystery thereto, was found in the fact that the toes of both feet rested on the ground, the heels being elevated, and the knees bent forward. A chair stood near the deceased, and the only marks of violence discernible were a few slight abrasions on the lower limbs; such, indeed, as might have been produced by contact with the chair. It may be added, that the handkerchief was attached to the window at a height of about six and a half feet above the floor. The discovery of the manner of death, added to the circumstances attending the decease, gave rise to uncomfortable suspicion that the case was one of murder. Living in unsettled times, it was contended that the prince had been killed by assassins, and that his body had been placed in the position in which it was found in order to suggest suicide by hanging as the cause of death. The abrasions on the limbs, certain peculiarities attending the mark left by the ligature on the neck, and the fact that the feet of deceased rested on the floor, were urged as so many facts supporting the theory of homicide. Certain other circumstances, such as a want of power in one arm, and the fact that the handkerchiefs were tied in knots of a complicated character, were duly urged in support of the latter view. But the experience of medical science gave powerful support to the opposite conjecture—that of suicide. Every medical jurist can point to cases of suicide by hanging, in which the mere position of the body at first appears strongly suggestive of its having been placed in that position with a view of simulating self-destruction. So far from persons suspending themselves in a free posture in such an act of suicide, it is comparatively rare to find their bodies in other positions than those from which it would appear they could have readily released themselves. Persons have been found dead almost in a sitting posture, and suspended in a position which at first sight would seem strongly to invalidate the theory of suicide. A man has been known to commit suicide by hanging himself from a hook in the top of a tent bedstead, being found with his knees well nigh resting on the bed; and one hospital patient was actually discovered resting on his knees by the side of his bed, having hanged himself from the top of the bedstead. It is, in fact, exceedingly rare to

find the suicide imbued with sufficient determination to take a leap into space; and the explanation of the readiness with which death may take place under these seemingly unfavourable circumstances may be held to rest on the fact that suspension in any position, in which the weight of the body is gently thrown on the neck, induces at first a state of insensibility, which, as it gradually deepens, causes increased pressure on the windpipe, and consequent death. In some few cases, the suspicious elements in the cases before us have been strengthened by the observation that the limbs of the deceased persons have been found to be firmly secured. Not merely may the hands be secured in a case of veritable suicide, but the weight of the body may actually be intentionally increased (as was found in a case of suicide occurring in 1844 at Worcester) by the attachment of a couple of flat irons to the wrist! Thus much for the curiosities of suicide; and when it is added that the blind have been known to destroy their own lives, and that the act of suicide has been perpetrated by a boy of nine, and by a man of ninety-seven years of age, as representing the opposite extremes, little is wanting to invest the subject with more than ordinary interest in the eyes of the psychologist.

A DAY AT HOMBURG.

A COUPLE of years after the great French-German war, the gambling firm at Homburg had been ordered to give up possession, and to take themselves off with their rouleaux, green cloth, packs of cards, and pack of cronpiers with their rakes, and the rakes they had made. The knife was to cut this ugly spot from the otherwise healthy German body, and before the last day of the year it was to be gone.

One of the great daily newspapers had despatched the present writer to assist at the expiring agonies of the institution, and two days after Christmas Day, in the rough winter night, I had sped across the Channel, had flown from Calais to Brussels, to Cologne, to Frankfort, without stop or stay, and had found myself betimes at Homburg. It was a cold, clear, frosty morning; the keen air coming with extra razor-like keenness from the grand purple hills which rose about the town. The beautiful gardens were leafless; the little street was deserted; it seemed like a stage by daylight.

It was with a curious feeling that I walked up from the station, attending the funeral as it were of "the bold, bad man," whose wicked career I had seen in better days. For I had been there in the old festive times—the genuine junketing days. It seemed like a dream. This the old fairy-like Homburg! The coloured fronts of the hotels, the pink and pale blue, all smirched and faded; the shutters closed; the doors half-opened! Then here was the chocolate-coloured Kursaal—imposing edifice with its orange-trees in tubs; its terrace and gardens behind; its charming halls all painted with gods and goddesses. A few of the townsfolk were going in and out, carrying parcels; men in uniform were taking down curtains; things were being packed and covered up; there was a melancholy air of depression over all. It was judgement day for them.

Behind from the terrace could be seen the charming gardens, the rickety "Kiosque," where the band erst played; the innumerable little three-legged tables and stout chairs, aids to coffee and chat. What soft sylvan evenings—what dreamy lotus-eating! Flanking us is the Belle Vue Hotel—scene of many a choice table d'hôte—now all shutters. Here is indeed the abomination of desolation. Bank, croupiers, cards, all gone!

As I wander about, how pleasantly the aroma of the fine old Homburg days rises! How short they were! There was the month's holiday in July snatched eagerly—the last day of assizes waited for. On board the packet that very night; the agreeable afternoon in Brussels; the cheerful and unaccustomed form of dinner; the theatre—"Genéviève de Brabant" was then in the first blush—so as to dispose of the time before the midnight express, since abolished; then to awake by the Rhine, and towards evening to find oneself ascending and ascending into the clear mountains, to be set down in the bright behind-the-scenes sort of town which bears the name of Homburg. How curious the first look as you entered; the quiet air of the visitors disposed about, and quite at home; the numerous English, who contrasted strangely with this background. The very gala air of the place seemed to whisper: "Oh, you who enter here, abandon care—eat, drink, and be merry!" And how merry all were! Elderly professional men came out in gay attire, disporting themselves all day long

—revelling in the banquets, chattering with old and new friends, sitting under the trees, gambling on the sly, or with daring defiance. They became positively juvenile in manner and gaiety of apparel. Portly mammas enjoyed themselves also, and as for the "girls" and sons, everything not only went merry as a marriage bell, but often ended in an actual commission to set the bells themselves a-ringing.

The town, as is well known, is built high up among the mountains, and the bath of clear, inspiring, invigorating air, rather than the waters, is the real curative spell. The street runs up from the railway-bridge, which lies at the entrance, with handsome houses, mainly hotels, with the favourite names, "Victoria," "Four Seasons," the inevitable "Russia," "France," and "Hesse." The Casino is in the centre, while at right-angles stretches down the hill the new part—the Kieselsteff Street, where are solid mansions, at equally solid prices, suitable "for a nobleman's or gentleman's family." There is, of course, the old squalid original quarter of the town, with an old grand ducal palace, and there are also the fine sylvan portions—all luxuriant trees and bosquets, ruins, "wood and water"—where, too, were gardens, and where the clamouring waters poured forth their streams. The Homburg day began betimes, when from the town the strangers were seen trooping forth in their hundreds down the tree-fringed avenues, making for the open country where their favourite fountains were. What a scene! The fountain down below, like an immense bear-pit, to which the guests were descending perpetually; while the German maidens worked ceaselessly, loading their convenient sticks with half-a-dozen glasses fitted to them—plunged into the water, deftly brought out full, and handed to the candidate with but little spilled. Then is the long promenade crowded, everyone walking up and down full of a surprising hilarity and good humour. Members of Parliament strangely brought together, judges, physicians, and fashionable persons, all grown cordial and affectionately intimate of a sudden. Near us played the band; a little way beyond was the orangery and gardens. How inspiring was that opening of the day. The busy clack of tongues, the glinting colours, the good-humour; even the dyspeptic making a successful effort, from the delusion that

they were bettering their health quaffing the waters. Then came the walk back, with one thought of breakfast, to which, as you walked, little *al fresco* tables set out along the path-side invited the wayfarer.

After breakfast came the lull, when was the opportunity for the fatal gilded chambers—gaudy cage for the foolish fluttering bird. All know the irresistible fascination, the welcome quiet, the inviting coolness; and then it was that Slyboots, head of a numerous family, and severe on such follies, would “slip down to read the Times.” There were some desperate mishaps that befell these elderly Josephs in white waistcoats and felt hats, and of which Mary Jane never learned a word, save from the family solicitor, after “poor dear John” had been put by in the family vault. The mornings glided by imperceptibly. Some took long walks. Rain seemed to be temporarily suspended out of compliment, or done during the night. It was not until the afternoon that people were supposed to get into “evidence.” Then the gardens filled. Greedy woman seized on half-a-dozen chairs at a time, “to gain some private ends,” laying retainers in the shape of parasols, handkerchiefs, &c., for persons that never came. Then the whole brave company was under review, with whole coteries of English, Irish, and Scotch who seemed more enchanted with seeing each other here than they were at home. Then the orchestra took its place in the kiosque—sometimes one of the amazing Prussian military bands, whose performance of a piece like the overture to William Tell struck one with wonder.

If one were asked in all honour what was the true aim and end of Homburg life, I should unhesitatingly answer “Dinner.” That it is to which the portly, well-washed, well-shaved fathers looked, for the dinners were exceeding good at all the hotels—and the red wine, too, which they drank, not through “helmet barred,” but out of green glasses. Chévet, the eminent Paris “restorer,” had a wing of the Kursaal to himself, and entertained past masters of gastronomy, who found the table d’hôte too coarse for their jaded stomachs—too strong and long also. Hence every day there was a series of little dinners got up or “commanded” in the great hall—fine dishes, finer wines, to the orchestra of yet finer prices. This gilded saloon, with its revellers, the music playing outside, the canaille seated on the

terrace, was the happy embodiment of the spirit of the place, and many candidates, flushed with the cheer, passed direct to the gambling rooms to their profit.

But at night the epicurean found all transformed into the Halls of Eblis. The gardens were lit up, the rooms blazed with “ten thousand additional lamps.” On one wing of the building was the beautiful theatre, and the Diva Patti gave delight to royal dukes and nobles, at, of course, royal and noble prices. Or it might be that it was ball night. The fiction was sustained that all were invited, receiving an invitation, with directions to come, if not in decent black pantaloons, at least in those of “a tender and united colour”—i.e. grey. Many an adorable foreign youth so disported himself. Romantic nights were those! The windows and glass doors gave on the terrace, and the shadows could be seen on the blinds violently passing, while the crash of music—Strauss’s latest—came from within. All night long the Bavarian beer was drunk fiercely out of “choppes.” Sometimes towards twelve, when midnight air was growing cool, there were madcap expeditions proposed to the fountains, far off, which plashed and rippled in solitude, and the waters were quaffed in frolic. The woods rang with airy laughter.

Then there were the proceedings of the royal duke, who was drinking the waters, and walking in the most consistent fashion: About these balls there was a romance—the gaudy rooms lit up, the curtained doorways leading to the quiet retirement of the gambling, where are the shaded round lamps, the absorbed serious air of the people standing round, the eyes focussed to a centre, the click of the ball cantering round on its steeple-chase till it drops exhausted into a ditch—the solemn chant of “Red wins, colour loses.” Another door leads to the room where the virtuous and good, who do not dance or game, read newspapers and *The Review of Two Worlds*, and old numbers of the illustrated papers; and reading at those places is the most depressing, heart-sinking business. All the while you hear the crash of the brazen chords of *The Beautiful Danube*, and see the flitting shadows.

This bill of fare might seem a little monotonous, but it was not so found. There was always some one turning up, some new arrival whom many knew, with personages like an English duchess, an English bishop, or political minister. Above all there was abundant character to

study, such as one might meet in a comedy. Always amusing was that standing dish, the reverential Muddleston, who prostrated himself in dust, puddle, or mud before every one of rank, and would have thought a shake hands with a duke bought dirt cheap at the price of a long fit of the gout. To how many noble skirts did this devotee glue himself! He would have pined away had they neglected him. And if this spectacle were dull, there was one yet drollier in that of the jackal, who hung on him, and, like Fag in the play, copied his master's proceedings at a humble distance. There was gossip, the flirtations, yea—and the scandals. Then there came—but this was rare—the scuffle, altercation, dispute, or whatever shape the difficulty assumed. It might be about an open window and a lady; or a letter and—a lady; or a remark and—a lady, who was ever “in the case.” Sometimes there was a thrashing, and prodigious excitement. Then the old king would arrive to stay a few days, and be seen in the shady avenues walking up and down, with his bluff head thrown back, attended by military courtiers tall as he. Or there was the invariable suicide in the woods, very misty as to the details, and especially so as to the person, who never could be distinctly identified. Then there was the perpetual change of characters; the new faces of to-day, the old ones gone to-morrow; even the pleasant variety of experiment at the different table d’hôtes, where one had not merely variety of cuisine, but also of people.

People repair to Homburg ostensibly for the sake of its curative waters. These I believe are admittedly of a Tartuffe description. They are certainly palatable and, to a great degree, harmless, while the early hours, walks prescribed, &c., artfully contribute by happy results to sustain their reputation. The doctors, too, Germans and all, act and dress their parts admirably, being in terrible alarm if a mistake has been made as to the particular fountain, being nice as to the measurements of the tumbler, &c. But in this are they no more histrionic than their brethren afar away and away from waters? When any one happens to be seriously ill, it must be unflattering to the local faculty to see how a stray English physician passing through is seized upon and hurried off to the patient. Such is a “short view” of some of the glories of Homburg in the fine old times.

SET IN A SILVER SEA.

BY B. L. FARJEON.

CHAPTER X. MARGARET TIGHTENS THE CHAINS WHICH BIND HER TO SLAVERY.

“OF what passed between us immediately after this I have but an indistinct remembrance, my agitation was so great. I know that one moment I accused my master of the blackest treachery, and the next entreated him upon my knees to tell me where I could find Clarice; I know that he made lame attempts at explanation, which I refused to accept, and that in the end he struck me, and forcing me into a small room, turned the key upon me. There was a bed in the room, but I did not seek repose; through that long, long night I sat in the dark, or walked about the room, asking myself what I could do to rescue my sister, and what motive my master could have had in getting rid of one who was useful and profitable to him. I could find no answers to my torturing questions. All that I could do was to suffer and wait.

“In the morning my master came to the door.

“‘Are you up?’ he called.

“‘Yes,’ I answered.

“He unlocked the door. I ran out to him; there was still a lingering hope. Clarice might have arrived during the night.

“‘Has she come?’ I cried eagerly. ‘Have you heard anything of her?’

“‘I have heard nothing of her.’ He looked at me keenly. ‘You have not slept.’

“‘How could I sleep in such agony and suspense as I am suffering?’

“‘It will not help you to find Clarice,’ he said.

“‘I wish I could die!’ I exclaimed despairingly.

“‘That will not help you to find Clarice.’

“‘You really mean it?’ I implored. ‘You wish to find her? You will try to find her?’

“‘Without doubt I shall, unless you continue to thwart me. You are a bad reasoner, Margaret. Did not Clarice put money in my pocket, and did you ever know me go against my own interests?’

“He had breakfast placed before me, and stood over me while I forced myself to eat; indeed, I was compelled to eat, having partaken of so little food during

the last two days. Then he bade me accompany him, and to my surprise took me to the office of a magistrate, where he made a formal complaint of the abduction of Clarice, his apprentice. He gave a minute description of Clarice, and of the man into whose care he had confided her, of the waggon which conveyed her away, of his instructions to the man, of his inability to discover any trace of him, and of my prostration and grief at my sister's disappearance. I listened in amazement. He spoke with such an assumption of sincerity and sorrow that it was scarcely possible for a stranger to disbelieve him.

"His statement was taken down in writing, and he was informed that the law could not assist him until he discovered the person into whose charge he had given his apprentice.

"It shall be the business of my life to find and punish him," said my master, "and to restore Clarice to the arms of her unhappy sister."

"The magistrate complimented him upon his humanity, and me upon having so kind-hearted a master and guardian. He was, indeed, too strong and cunning for me.

"When we left the magistrate's office, my master said:

"Margaret, it is time we came to an understanding. You did not sleep last night. Why?"

"I am very unhappy," I replied, "and I could not sleep."

"You passed the time in thinking what it was best for you to do to find Clarice?"

"Yes."

"I also have been thinking seriously of that—as I have proved by my visit to the magistrate this morning—and of the relations in which you and I stand to each other. They do not satisfy me."

"Neither do they satisfy me."

"You do not trust me?"

"I was silent; with Clarice in my mind, I felt it would not be prudent to anger him too far.

"It is clear that you are determined not to do me justice, and that you are tired of me. Well, I am also getting tired of you. You pine for liberty. I give it to you. Do you understand me?"

"Not quite," I replied, with inward fear.

"Yet it is not difficult. I have a legal claim upon you by which I can compel you to work for me until you are twenty-one years of age; I am willing to relinquish

that claim. You look upon your servitude with me as a kind of bondage; I offer you release from a hateful slavery. If you so decide it, you are free to go. I shall require you to sign a paper to the effect that you leave me of your own accord, and that you will never trouble me again; and this night, if you wish, shall terminate our partnership."

"I was so confounded by this unexpected proposal, made apparently in a frank spirit, that I could not find words to reply.

"I intend," continued my master, "to have this matter settled immediately. I will no longer put up with your whims and caprices. I give you till six o'clock to reflect and decide; if before that time you do not come to me, either to agree to my offer or to promise to be more submissive to me in the future, I will take effectual means to rid myself of you. You have sense as well as spirit, and I think you can see that I am in earnest."

"If I resolve to leave you," I said, "will you give me a small sum of money to help me on?"

"Not the smallest coin," he replied, "and for the best of all reasons—I am absolutely a beggar."

"And I should never see you more?"

"Never, if I could help it."

"Would you continue your search for my sister?"

"Certainly."

"And if you found her?"

"I paused, in great agitation. Never till this moment had I realised how completely this man held me in his power.

"He repeated my words. 'And if I found her? Well?'"

"Would you restore her to me?"

"You must think me a dull-brained idiot, indeed! Clarice is worth her weight in gold to me."

"You know that my heart, my life, are bound up in Clarice, and by force you would keep her from me?"

"Still unreasonable, Margaret," he said, in a cold tone of displeasure. "It is not I who would keep her by force from you; it is you who, by your own deliberate act will decree the separation. A little reflection will lead you to a clearer view of the case. You have told me in numerous offensive ways that I am acting the part of a tyrant to you; I am, after all, a man of feeling—that is, I am not entirely a log of wood, without sensation. Matters have gone on most un-

pleasantly for many months until at length they have come to a crisis, and I offer you what you sigh for, your freedom. Upon this, you accuse me of further cruelty. There is no pleasing or satisfying you, one way or another, and I am more than ever resolved that our relations shall come to an end or be placed upon a better footing. What is more, I will have no trickery. You have six hours before you for decision. I shall remain about the inn till six o'clock; if you do not come to me before that hour is passed, I shall adopt what course I deem best."

"If," I said timidly, "I, being alone, should by some good fortune find Clarice, would you take her from me?"

"She is my apprentice, and I can claim her whenever I have the opportunity. I offer you your freedom; I shall not say how I should act by her. You will confess, Margaret, that by her side you are but a small attraction. I can give you up more easily than I could Clarice. But make your mind easy. Without my aid, your chances of ever seeing Clarice again would not be worth a breath of air."

"By this time we had reached the inn, and there my master left me. I entered the room in which I had been made a prisoner the previous night, and endeavoured to think; but my mind was in a whirl, and the narrow space seemed to add to my confusion. I went into the open, and under the better influence of sweet air, which cooled my hot face, and bright skies which whispered hope and comfort, I schooled myself into a calmer mood. I did not forget that the good Lord was over all, and that faith in Him would surely help me in my great trouble. I bowed my head and prayed, and my mind became clearer. That my master would be as good as his word, and would give me my freedom if I wished, I saw no reason to doubt; I was not so certain that he really wished to rid himself of me, for if he desired it, he could do so without difficulty, by simply leaving me on the road. It forced itself upon me that by accepting his offer of liberty I should be depriving myself of the only link that might lead me to Clarice. It might be that the entire affair was a trick—that he himself had planned the separation, and had conducted matters to their present crisis, so that I should of my own doing destroy any claim I had upon him, and leave him free to travel with Clarice wherever he wished. I shuddered at the thought. Helpless,

friendless as I was, the reflection that absolutely my only chance of finding Clarice was by remaining with my master and keeping watch over him, grew gradually into a conviction. To beat despairingly against the bars would not assist me—coolness, watchfulness, submission might. Upon this decision I acted at once. I sought my master, and found him, as usual, playing cards with two or three village louts. He threw up the cards and came to me at once.

"I have made up my mind," I said.

"To what effect?"

"To remain with you."

"And be submissive?"

"Yes."

"You are wise for your own interests, perhaps not so much for mine. But I am a man always prepared to do my duty. I have drawn up two papers, in one of which you ask for your freedom and I give it you, on the condition that you never trouble me again. That, I tear up." He did so. "This other paper is to the effect that you bind yourself afresh to me, that in full knowledge of all the circumstances that have passed, you are satisfied that my conduct is that of an honourable man, and that you promise to obey me in all reasonable ways. Will you sign it?"

"Yes. You will do your best to recover Clarice?"

"I promise you."

"He called the landlord to witness my signature, and thus I bound myself afresh to an abhorred slavery."

"From that time to this I have never seen Clarice, nor of my knowledge am I acquainted with the smallest detail of her life since we were so cruelly, so wickedly parted. My master and I travelled from place to place in the old way, and he made what use he could of the gifts I possess. By my services we have managed to live in a poor fashion; we might, I doubt not, have done better so far as the earning of money goes, but my master appears to have lost all spirit since the fatal night from which my thoughts never wander. He lays the blame upon Clarice, and says that she has ruined his career. For the first few months my master used to come to me with accounts of rumours he had heard that a girl answering to the description of Clarice had been seen in such or such a place, and to that place we made all haste, to learn that the rumours were false. My master insists upon it that Clarice has been stolen and sold to some travelling com-

pany, the manager of which takes pains to avoid us, or that she is now in another country, entirely out of our reach. Lately he has treated me more harshly than he has ever done before, and a dozen times a day tells me I am the curse of his life. But although I am frightened of him it seems to me that I must remain with him until he casts me from him, or until I am dead. It is the only way in which I can prove that I am faithful to Clarice. We are now without food or money, and he told me this afternoon that he could not afford to pay for lodgment for us to-night. That is why I am staying in this forest, living upon a hope that is dead, and almost tempted to believe that it would be better for me to put an end to my life than linger on in this state of exquisite suffering. It is impossible for me to say whether my master's story that Clarice has been stolen from us is true or false; it is impossible for me to know whether he has ever uttered one word of truth with relation to my dear, my darling sister, and whether he has not led me from place to place upon invented rumours. My cup of sorrow is very full, and I do not know which way to turn for a crumb of comfort."

CHAPTER XI. WELCOME TO THE SILVER ISLE.

"THIS," said Matthew Sylvester to those inhabitants of the Silver Isle whom he had chosen to hear the story of Margaret, "is the account I received from Margaret's lips of her trials and sufferings. As I have told you, I wrote it down at her dictation in after times, with but little alteration, so that some record should be kept of what struck me as a very pitiful and pathetic story. As I listened to her that night in the forest my sympathy for her was very great. Every word she uttered bore the impress of truth, and only a thoroughly good woman could have expressed such unselfish love and devotion as she expressed for Clarice. Many times in the course of the narration did she stop and listen, thinking she heard the step or the voice of her master, but he did not make his appearance, and she finished her story without interruption. If I had not already gathered from her description of her master that he was in heart and soul an irreclaimable scoundrel, I should have known it from the fact of his leaving a young girl like Margaret alone and unprotected in such a lonely spot; it was the act of one without feeling or humanity. But I had formed my idea of this man

long before Margaret had finished, and my experience of human nature enabled me to arrive nearer to the truth with respect to his dealing with Clarice than Margaret could or dared suspect. With a true pity for the forlorn and desolate girl, I made up my mind to rescue her from her perilous and wretched position. I asked her if, when her master left her, he had promised soon to return, but she could give no information beyond that he said he was going into the town to endeavour to get food or money. Upon that I pointed out to her that it was not likely he would return before morning, and that the best thing she could do would be to accompany me to the inn, and accept of my protection. At first I could not persuade her; she feared ill-treatment in case her master returned and did not find her. I pledged her my word that she should not be ill-treated, and said that my son and I would protect her.

"I know more of the law than you do," I said, "and I am convinced that I can release you from the tyranny of this villain. That it is your best course to leave him I am satisfied—as satisfied as I am that, if you remain with him till death severs the connection, you will never hear one true word from his lips concerning your sister."

"Her tears flowed at this bitter but necessary assurance, and I stood by her side in silence while she debated within herself. Suddenly she turned her eyes full upon my face and said:

"Why do you urge me to this? You have never seen me before. What motive have you for wishing me to leave my master?"

"Margaret is a woman with a straight mind, friends, as you will discover for yourselves if we remain with you. I was pleased at this rough frankness.

"My child," I said to her in reply, "I have a sincere pity for you; you have stirred my heart. That in itself would be a sufficient motive, but I have a more selfish one. My son and I, leading just such a wandering life as you have done, would find it lightened and made happier if we had a woman with us. I can see many pleasant pictures in the companionship. I will be a father to you, my son shall be your brother. It is certain you will receive from us affection and fair treatment. You will earn your bread as we do. You will not be a slave; you will be free to go if you find our company

distasteful to you. We travel into parts of the country where it is more likely you will learn something of your sister, if there is anything to learn, than you can possibly do in your present circumstances. For the rest, if you cannot read sincerity in my face I am powerless to convince you of my honesty of purpose.'

"She placed her hand in mine, and saying she would trust me, accompanied me to the inn, where I made arrangements for her repose. I was up early in the morning, in the confident expectation of seeing Margaret's master. Surely enough, he accosted me the moment I put my face outside the inn door.

"'You brought a girl called Margaret here last night,' he said.

"'I did,' I replied. 'I brought her from the forest, where you had left her without food or protection. You cannot justify yourself.'

"'I am not called upon to do so by you,' he retorted. 'I did not leave her alone for longer than a quarter of an hour.'

"'An untruth,' I said; 'but that is not to the point. I intend to take Margaret from your charge. You are not fit to have the care of a young girl, and this one shall no longer remain with you.'

"I spoke boldly, knowing it was the only way with such a man as he.

"'How do you propose to deprive me of my property?' he asked, with a covert look at me, measuring my power as it were.

"'By purchase,' I said; 'and if that is not to your liking by means which will not only not put money in your pocket, but may place you in the clutches of the law. I see I am making an impression upon you. You do not seem to be in flourishing circumstances. How much for the release of this girl? Not, mark you, that I acknowledge your right to her. I can prove the contrary, or a lawyer can do it for me; but I am willing to settle the matter amicably, without the aid of a third person. Name a sum, and let it be small, or you will get nothing, for the release of Margaret? Such a man as yourself does not want to be encumbered with a woman who hates and fears you. Name your price, and try your luck with it at the nearest gaming-table.'

"He caught at the bait, and named a sum not beyond my means. I agreed to pay it to him, and we adjourned for the purpose of drawing up such an agreement as I considered binding. I saw that the fellow was

tired of Margaret, and that, setting aside a small feeling of personal vindictiveness which belonged to his mean nature, he was glad of the opportunity of ridding himself of her so easily and on terms so favourable. So as to place Margaret entirely out of his power I went to a notary, and had the agreement attested; in effect it was a transfer of apprenticeship, by which for a certain sum Margaret's master relinquished all claim upon her future services. This business concluded I said to the man:

"'It is not likely you or I will ever meet again; if we are in the same neighbourhood we shall be glad to avoid each other. Do one gracious act. Tell me what has become of Clarice, and whether I can adopt any means to bring her and Margaret together.'

"He eyed me narrowly, and said, 'I will sell what I know.'

"'You have some information to give then?'

"'I have.'

"I took from my pocket a gold piece, and offered it to him, but the wretch was greedy, and haggled; however, by diplomatic conduct, I convinced him that I would give no more, and he agreed to accept it.

"'How I know what I know,' he said, 'is my secret, which no man can buy. Only in one way can Margaret and Clarice ever be brought together again.'

"'Tell it me.'

"'Death's way. Clarice is dead.'

"'You are not lying?' I asked, shocked and startled by the news, and by the callous tone in which it was conveyed.

"'I have no purpose to serve. The girl is dead.'

"'When did this occur?'

"'Shortly after Clarice's disappearance. I learnt it by accident.'

"'Why did you not tell Margaret?'

"'I should have lost my hold upon her; there would have been no bearing with her. She has troubled me enough.'

"I could get no further information from him, and we parted never to meet again.

"I determined to keep the news from Margaret, at least for a time. All that I told her upon my return to the inn was that she was free, and that her master had no further claim upon her. I was glad to see that she and Paul had already become friends.

"'You are now your own mistress,

Margaret,' I said, 'and are at liberty to decide for yourself. Will you join us? We shall soon discover whether we suit each other.'

"She replied that she was happy in the prospect I held out to her, and so the compact was made.

"The companionship was in every respect agreeable, and we continued our wandering life, living from hand to mouth, seldom grumbling at the bad fortune which pursued us and kept our pockets empty. There were others worse off than we were. It is a hard world out there, friends; harder for the weak than the strong—harder, I believe, for the pure at heart than for the cunning ones who avoid the straight path upon which the full sunlight shines.

"Then happened a natural thing. In the springtime of life love-buds prepare to blossom. Margaret and Paul were drawn to each other, and sometimes, unconscious to themselves, walked hand-in-hand. It gladdened me to watch the growth of love between two beings who were dear to me: for the more I learned of Margaret's nature the better I appreciated her, and the stronger grew my respect and admiration for her character. Never for an hour did she forget Clarice; the dear name was constantly on her lips. In the midst of her enjoyment of the passing time she would pause and sigh: 'Ah, if Clarice were here!' and would reproach herself for feeling light-hearted in the absence of her beloved sister. Often did I ask myself whether it would not be more merciful to acquaint her with the truth, and as often did I shrink from the sad task. She had one intense desire—to visit once more the town in which Clarice had been torn from her; but her description of the place was so vague that it was long before we were enabled to decide in what direction it lay. The moment we ascertained with some degree of certainty we directed our steps thitherwards. At the same time I resolved that when we reached that abode of sad memories I would inform Margaret of her

sister's death. We arrived in the town, and at Margaret's request I made enquiries after Clarice. I might as well have spoken in an unknown tongue. Not a soul remembered her, or could give the slightest information with respect to her. The town was a fashionable one, frequented by tourists chiefly of the better class, who flowed in and out like a constant tide. We stayed there for three days, and when we had left it behind us, I gently broke the melancholy news to Margaret. I cannot describe her grief; it was so sharp and despairing as to cause me for a time to fear for her reason. Had she not been with us I believe she would have sought relief in death. But love and sympathy lightened her sorrow, and in the course of time she grew calmer. She will never forget Clarice. Old as she may live to be, the memory of that dearly-beloved child will never fade from her mind.

"Friends, I have but little more to say. Margaret returned Paul's love, and they were married. Fortune, as I have told you, has not been kind to us, and Margaret, who will soon become a mother, yearned for a more peaceful life. Many and many a time did I describe to her the sweet repose I enjoyed here in my youthful days, and at length, prevailed upon by Margaret, I consented to come and ask you to receive us. It may be that the restless career we have led may have unsettled us for the quiet life of this lovely isle. But let us try. Briefly let me say—not in praise of ourselves, but as simple matters of truth—that Margaret is a woman who deserves to be loved, and that since I last bade you farewell I have done no act which should make me ashamed to grasp the hands of old comrades in friendship."

The islanders had listened to Matthew Sylvester's story in silence and with earnest attention, and now that his recital was finished, they rose and said:

"Resume your old-life place among us. We welcome you and yours, Matthew Sylvester."

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